

Intimate Partner Abuse of Men

Emily Tilbrook, Alfred Allan & Greg Dear
School of Psychology and Social Science
Edith Cowan University



Participants

- Total of 28
 - 15 Male Victims
 - 8 Service Providers
 - 5 Significant Others



Stage One Findings Overview

Core categories	Subordinate categories
Forms of abuse	Physical abuse Psychological abuse Mental abuse Sexual abuse Financial abuse Legal or administrative abuse Social abuse
Targets of abuse	Perpetrator issues Victim issues
Perceived aetiology of abusive behaviour	Perpetrator issues Victim issues
Impact of abuse	Perpetrator issues Victim issues
Disclosure of abuse	Perpetrator issues Victim issues



Forms of abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Psychological Abuse
- Verbal Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Legal or Administrative Abuse
- Social Abuse



Targets of abuse

- Children of the Perpetrator
- Family, Friends and significant others
- Acquaintances and strangers to the perpetrator



Perceived aetiology of abusive behaviour

Subordinate categories	Themes
Perpetrator issues	Substance use Mental health Dysfunctional family of origin Learned behaviour History of traumatic events
Victim issues	Propensity to enter abusive relationships Vulnerability because of personality Vulnerability because of upbringing Vulnerability because of physical health



Impacts of Abuse

Subordinate category	Theme
Impact of abuse on victims	Mental Impacts Mental Illness Suicide Ideation Physical well-being Loss
Impact of abuse on others	NI

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Impacts Continued

- **Mental Impacts**
 - *I was frightened and I was shaken. I was wanted to protect [daughter] but I didn't know what was going on and I didn't know what she [wife] was going to do because she was just, yea, ropeable. I was worried that if I did something it might blow up the situation more and I just didn't know what to do (Vo2)*
 - *I felt that I had died I felt that I had gone on living but that the person inside it was dead, had died, ... life is crushed ... You actually lose your dignity in a way you stop being able to be proud of yourself and you sort of you sort of I don't know (Vo5)*
 - *... he was very withdrawn and very, very he just wasn't himself and I thought there is something wrong there is something terribly wrong (SO01)*

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Impacts Continued

- **Mental Illness**
 - *... he developed a mental illness he started getting all kinds of paranoid delusions because he thought that the system was against him (SP06)*

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Impacts Continued

- **Suicide Ideation**
 - *I wasn't coping. You know I was to the point where I was very suicidal, I was very suicidal and if it wasn't for the sake of those two little baby boys ... (Vo1)*
 - *I mean at one stage I nearly killed myself and the only thing that stopped me was that I could for some reason I could hear my daughter talking to me in my head and I just couldn't I couldn't go through with it (Vo5)*

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Impacts Continued

- **Physical Well-being**
 - *... so I have turned up to work with scratches and bruises and those sorts of things (V11)*
 - *I've seen him with skin off the side of his face...I have seen him with a huge bruise on the top of his head (SO1)*
 - *with bruises with you know a black eye bruises on his arms bruises on his face gouging on his face (SO2)*
 - *I couldn't see out of the eye for about oh 3 or 4 weeks. I went to see a specialist and they done tests and done things to it and its all damaged behind all bruised and you know swollen behind and but now I can't read in that eye without glasses (Vo1)*

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Impacts Continued

- **Loss**
 - *I lost my job (Vo4)*
 - *I have just had to walk away to a whole new house (Vo3)*
 - *he decided the best thing to do was to not have any contact whatsoever with his daughter and then he doesn't have that contact with his partner ...and he has been so much better since that but he misses his daughter (SO3)*

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Impacts Continued

• Impact of Abuse on Others

- *as a result of the violence that went on.....the little three year old doesn't speak properly (Vo1)*
- *And then I saw my son, I think what really ate into me, was seeing my oldest son crying. [Participant begins to cry.] Excuse me for a second. Yeah he had his hand over his ears yeah over his face ... (Vo3)*
- *my brother's not fond of my mother ... because of what she did to my father growing up ... people ask me why I am such a cynical person and these [referring to the abuse] are factors involved in it all (SO04)*



Disclosure of Abuse

Subordinate category	Theme
Barriers	Denial
	Fear of not being believed
	Shame
	Lack of appropriated services
	Bias
Facilitators	Protect perpetrator
	Emotional turmoil and ambivalence
	Feeling supported
	Publicly available information
	Attempts to understand abuse



Barriers

• Denial

- *I think he is in total denial total denial ... it's a it's like a phantom type thing it's like you see something but you don't your brain actually can't register it (SO01)*
- *it wasn't until sometime later and I actually went and saw a psychologist a few times ... he said well, you realise that you were you had just been a victim of abuse. And I looked at him and I said no what are you talking about, and I thought oh my god I have to and I think that was the first time that I ever bothered to recognise the fact ... (Vo8)*
- *a lot of it is the pride factor and the cultural issues of you know that that just doesn't happen to men (SPo6)*



Barriers

• Fear of not being believed

- *another aspect of the abuse of males is that males are not believed (SPo1)*
- *You know to be man and to be scared like that but not actually do anything about say anything to anyone because of the fact that you are not going to be believed (SO3)*
- *yeah, I spoke to everybody, counsellors, psychologists, lawyers, police... everybody just went oh, oh, oh gee, oh if she is that bad get away from there. ... It's something that shouldn't happen, I mean it just shouldn't happen but there's a lot women out there that do it ... (Vo1)*



Barriers

• Shame

- *Because of the shame he didn't want to walk away he didn't want to say anything to anybody (SO03)*
- *What was worse was to go to someone and ask for help which frankly you have to swallow your dignity somewhat to do that anyway I don't care if you are a woman or a man. It is probably worse for a man because they are probably acculturated more to you know to not admit that sort of thing (Vo5)*
- *usually men are put in a position where whatever happens, you're just supposed to deal with it, and I'd been dealing with it for 10 years and it was getting pretty heavy to carry around and I never really told anybody per se all the things that had been happening (Vo7)*



Barriers

• Lack of appropriate services

- *There is no service provider is there, for males that experience that kind of thing I don't think. No one who I'd imagine would take any notice of it (V13)*
- *I am quite honestly a little cynical of the services offered by government and community in respect to this area they are lacking badly (Vo4)*
- *lack of understanding and support and just an unwillingness to want to know or be involved from probably from all quarters almost from all quarters, ... (Vo3)*



Barriers

• Bias

- *women are taken care of out there but the men aren't (SP07)*
- *men out there do actually go through and have more hassle as a male than the women do (SO03)*
- *I think that to be honest these agencies follow a pattern and they just follow that pattern almost ritualistically and I think that frankly inside that pattern there has become this element of sexual discrimination where they make assumptions about you once you are man or once they identify you as a man and I think that is what led them to make mistakes in my case because I don't think that they did it maliciously but I certainly don't think anybody stopped to think about it. ... yeah you see domestic violence resources are set up for women, only men hit women, women don't hit men so what was I talking about that was the general response I would get. Or they would say something like we really only help women here or there aren't really the services available. So I didn't really get any support out of them (V05)*



Barriers

• Protection of perpetrator

- *I have never had charges laid on her because you know she's my wife and I love her ... I still feel something for her even though she has gone right off of the deep end at the moment, she is still my little boys' mother. ... trying to protect my wife and trying to protect my children (V01)*
- *I realised somewhere in the piece it's pretty common for victims of abuse to have a, for some reason, a desire to protect their abusers, it's pretty common and I guess I felt like I was in that situation (V07)*



Barriers

• Emotional turmoil and ambivalence

- *You know I haven't spoken very much about it because I think if I go into that territory I am going to break down I am on the verge of it now ... it just it kind of makes me feel tight and clenched up inside. I can't really tell you why, I guess it is because I don't know, maybe it is emotional memory but it is just its hard to, it is hard to sort of access that part of my experience without being ... I don't know how to describe it (V05)*
- *You don't know whether you want to be in this relationship with this abusive person, naturally, and on the other hand enjoying and wanting to be with the person that you appreciate, and because they're so distinctly different thoughts it's very disorienting. You know, it's hard to settle on one and feel comfort in that and make an informed choice. It is just confusing and disorienting (V13)*



Facilitators

• Feeling supported

- *My friends probably I think are the only reason I managed to pull through ... My friends and family, the extended family, were supportive (V04)*
- *Well she [a counsellor] was very receptive and very understanding. She clearly could relate to what I was saying and that was very comforting to me. It was a huge relief actually to actually have somebody listen and then be able to actually give me a bit of an explanation of what was happening (V07)*
- *I finally joined one of the dad's support online groups which are the only real place that I have actually ... found any consolation. ... I read other peoples stories and I thought yeah it's true I really was abused and there is nothing wrong with it and you know there's no shame in it and you know you can see that other guys have been through exactly the same thing you know so you're not alone (V07)*



Facilitators

• Publically available information

- *in about 2003 I had seen an article in a newspaper it was domestic violence prevention month ... and I read the article and as I read the article I just found myself and my experience very akin to what the women experience domestic violence, that experience. So I went in and I asked to speak with somebody. ... I read the book probably in a couple of days and was utterly amazed at the parallels between my situation and what was going on in that book... very informative and I felt very into what was happening and at that point I guess I realised that I was probably in more, I don't know if the right word is danger, but I was in a much worse situation than I thought I was (V07)*
- *I think on a simple message that goes out that says yes you know all human beings can experience domestic violence men do too. I think it is ... getting that message out there that this can happen and does happen to men while at the same time acknowledging that it still is primarily you know men to women but it is getting the message out there that that it can and it does happen (SP05)*



Facilitators

• Attempts to understand abuse

- *That changed to being trying to understand things a bit more like why, why would that happen you know like almost a forensic sort of amateur approach like what were the circumstances (V12)*
- *His focus really was what is actually happening for her ... he certainly wanted to check out what was going on for her probably more than what was going on for him (SO05)*

